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Summary record of the 1st meeting
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Chairperson: Mr. Majoor ..... (Netherlands)

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07-63896 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

1. **The Chairperson** said he took it that the Commission, in accordance with its established practice, wished to hold an open meeting.

2. *It was so decided.*

Tribute to the memory of the victims of the bombing of the United Nations offices in Algiers on 11 December 2007

3. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the members of the Commission observed a minute of silence.*

Adoption of the agenda (PBC/2/SLE/2)

4. *The agenda was adopted.*

Consideration and adoption of the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework (PBC/2/SLE/1)

5. **The Chairperson** drew attention to the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework (PBC/2/SLE/1), which had been developed in a consultative process involving all major stakeholders. He paid tribute to the efforts of all those involved, in particular the President and Government of Sierra Leone. The Framework was a flexible document which could be further modified on the basis of developments on the ground. He took it that members wished to adopt the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework.

6. *It was so decided.*

7. **Ms. Bangura** (Sierra Leone), welcoming the adoption of the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework, said that it marked an important step forward in the international community's sustained engagement with the people of Sierra Leone. The Framework rested on the twin pillars of national ownership and partnership. Her country recognized its moral and constitutional responsibility to establish conditions conducive to the economic and social welfare of its people. At the same time, it was aware of the need for cooperation with others, including the Commission, international financial institutions, and individual States at the bilateral level. The principles of national ownership and partnership were inextricably linked. Indeed, the United Nations itself was based not only on the principle of sovereignty but also on the principle of international cooperation.

8. Sierra Leone welcomed the inclusion of the energy sector, in particular electricity, as a priority area in the Framework, since energy was a cross-cutting issue affecting all the peacebuilding priorities identified in the Framework. Moreover, the energy sector was in crisis and should be treated as such. It was to be hoped that the Commission's initial response to the Government's emergency plan for electricity generation and distribution in Freetown and its environs would be translated into action as a matter of urgency.

9. Her Government took its commitments seriously, and had concerns about certain points in the Framework document. Some were purely technical or pertained to facts, such as the references to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, the Kimberley Process and government support for the participation of young men and women as candidates and voters in the forthcoming local council elections. However, other elements were prescriptive and would have an impact on principles enshrined in the Constitution. For example, it would have been preferable to delete paragraph 25 (s), which referred to the positions of the Attorney General and the Minister of Justice. Moreover, the idea of giving the Anti-Corruption Commission independent powers to prosecute was constitutionally problematic. The following formulation for paragraph 25 (r) would therefore have been more acceptable: "Review the Anti-Corruption Strategy (2000) and develop a holistic strategy to ensure the effectiveness of the Anti-Corruption Commission".

10. Other elements, as currently formulated, could be misconstrued. For that reason, the following wording for paragraph 25 (l) would have been preferable: "Accelerate the process of reviewing the terms and conditions of service of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces". It was to be hoped that her Government's concerns would be addressed in the country-specific meetings over the next six months in the context of the periodic review of the Framework and its implementation. In the meantime, she noted that the Framework was a flexible document which could be modified jointly by the Government of Sierra Leone and the Commission, as stated in paragraph 7.

11. The next phase of the Commission's engagement with Sierra Leone, namely the review and tracking of progress in the implementation of the Framework, was already under way: aid coordination mechanisms were in place. She was pleased to note that Sierra Leone would not have to deal with the problems and financial implications of establishing new monitoring mechanisms. Efforts should focus, with the support of the international community, on securing the necessary resources to enhance the capacity of existing mechanisms. Her Government would cooperate fully in the development of the matrix template for facilitating the review process and the effective implementation of the Framework.

12. The people of Sierra Leone would be looking to their Government and to the Commission to fulfil the commitments set out in the Framework document, so that they could see and enjoy the dividends of peace. The principal parties to the Framework should continue to raise public awareness of the mandate and work of the Commission and the respective roles of the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund.

13. The Framework was the result of a cooperative effort on the part of a large number of stakeholders and partners. Her Government looked forward to working closely with them in the tracking and review process. If a spirit of partnership and cooperation prevailed, the Framework would be implemented successfully. Success would be measured on the ground and in the lives of the ordinary people of Sierra Leone, who were still yearning for real peace after more than a decade of armed conflict.

14. **The Chairperson** said that the delegation's comments on the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework had been duly noted and would be taken into account in the process of tracking and review of implementation.

15. **Mr. Menkerios** (Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs) congratulated Sierra Leone on its recent successful elections, which were a fitting testimony to the country's efforts to build peace and promote democratic governance. He also welcomed the adoption of the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework, which would boost efforts to consolidate peace and help to ensure continued international support for the country. The United Nations, through its Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL), would continue to support the work of the Peacebuilding Commission in order to ensure that the gains of peace were sustained. Every effort should be made to ensure the timely implementation of the Framework.

16. **Mr. Angelo** (Executive Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone) said that the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework was the result of a fruitful engagement between the Commission and the Government of Sierra Leone, coupled with the full involvement of the NGO community. It had been developed against the backdrop of elections in Sierra Leone, which had been successful despite a number of difficulties along the way and which represented a critical step in the process of political stabilization in the country. However, a number of major political and development challenges had to be addressed in the near future if the country was to remain on track. He was pleased to note that the new leadership was demonstrating the strong national commitment needed in order to tackle those challenges.

17. A strategic approach was currently being formulated in order to resolve the governance issues set out in the Framework. Key priorities should be addressed first. Political dialogue and public information and communication activities should continue. In that context, he welcomed the President's recent decision to launch a campaign aimed at changing attitudes. The necessary capacity to implement the Framework should be developed and adequate resources should be made available. In all areas, a strong partnership between the international community and Sierra Leone was essential. The Framework addressed the critical areas relevant to peace consolidation and was consistent with existing frameworks, including the Poverty Reduction Strategy, and with policy statements made by the President after the recent elections.

18. Sierra Leone had been a success story to date. Progress had been made in the areas of peacekeeping, peace consolidation, democratization, recovery and rehabilitation, humanitarian issues and security sector reform. The United Nations integrated presence in Sierra Leone was working well and a close partnership had been established between the United Nations and the donor community. However, that progress had not been accompanied by growth in jobs or improvements in social services, governance, the administration of justice and gender equality. Moreover, the root causes

of the conflict referred to in the Framework still needed to be addressed.

19. One of the key constraints the country faced was its weak capacity to implement policies and plans. Member States had a responsibility to maintain their engagement with Sierra Leone and their focus on capacity development, to which the maximum possible resources should be allocated.

20. Sierra Leone currently found itself at a crossroads. Success in the consolidation of peace and democracy could lead the international community to shift its attention elsewhere. The role of the Framework and of the Commission was to continue to provide the people of Sierra Leone with the support they needed.

21. **Mr. Ohiorhenuan** (United Nations Development Programme) said that the recent elections in Sierra Leone represented a milestone in the peacebuilding process and had set an example for the transition of power in post-conflict societies. The adoption of the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework was also a major achievement. The dialogue between the Government of Sierra Leone and its international partners had been enhanced by the discussions in the Peacebuilding Commission, which had emphasized the importance in post-conflict countries of coordinated international interventions that were consistent with national priorities. Moreover, a potential benefit of integrated peacebuilding strategies was more accurate identification of obstacles to the effective implementation of national priorities. Ultimately, joint initiatives would be judged on their ability to deliver results on the ground. The Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework was an important step in that direction.

22. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had a long-established presence in Sierra Leone and had supported the Government's post-conflict recovery efforts. It had also been actively engaged in the development of the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework. Under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2008-2010, UNDP would focus on enhancing pro-poor growth, promoting democratic governance and peace consolidation and reducing the incidence of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases. A key priority for 2008 was to support the local government elections. In addition, the priorities highlighted in the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework had already been taken into account in the UNDP country programme approved in September.

23. Sierra Leone had come a long way since the civil war, but many challenges remained. UNDP would continue to support the Commission and would help to ensure the effective implementation of the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework.

24. **Mr. Løvald** (Norway) said that the adoption of the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework marked an important step in the relationship between Sierra Leone and the Commission. He commended the efforts of all those involved in its elaboration, in particular the newly elected Government, civil society organizations, the Peacebuilding Support Office and UNIOSIL. As in the case of Burundi, the Commission's work was now moving from the identification of critical peacebuilding areas to the implementation of pressing tasks.

25. Foremost responsibility for the implementation of the Framework lay with the Government of Sierra Leone, in an open dialogue with its partners. In order for the Commission to deliver on its commitments, all the relevant parties must act both collectively and individually. Outreach would also be an important task for the Commission. The Framework should be a living document, adapted to changes on the ground and improvements in capabilities. Moreover, the multi-stakeholder approach that was crucial to successful implementation and to the achievement of early peace dividends should be maintained.

26. **Mr. Takasu** (Japan), having praised the efforts of all those involved in the elaboration of the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework, said that the adoption of the document constituted an important milestone for the Commission. The Framework's value was enhanced by the involvement of various stakeholders in the drafting process, the inclusion of a specific timeline for the implementation of the Government's commitments and the precise statement of the Commission's own commitments. It also contained a clear outline of how it would relate to other initiatives and frameworks, making it easier for new donors to contribute. The Commission's strategy should be in line with the overall recovery effort in Sierra Leone, including the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

27. The Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework should be a living document, providing the basis for

sustained engagement and the mobilization of support and resources from all relevant stakeholders in order to achieve concrete results on the ground. The Commission played a central role in that regard and must take the lead in implementing the Framework. His Government was particularly pleased to support the emergency plan for improving electricity generation and distribution in Freetown. He urged bilateral donors, United Nations funds and programmes, the international financial institutions and other stakeholders to stand firm in their support for Sierra Leone and to identify and provide appropriate assistance on the basis of the Framework.

28. **Mr. Williams** (Jamaica), having welcomed the adoption of the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework, said that the document set the stage for the Commission, together with all Sierra Leone's partners, to take its work to the next level. His delegation trusted that the document would be implemented with the flexibility needed to ensure success.

29. **Mr. Hoscheit** (Luxembourg) welcomed the adoption of the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework, which was a testament to the efforts of all the parties involved. The document reflected the Commission's integrated approach and identified precise priorities with regard to peacebuilding. It represented a successful combination of the principles of national ownership and partnership, which would make it possible for all the relevant stakeholders to pool resources and focus on shared objectives.

30. It was particularly important to establish an effective mechanism for the review and tracking of progress, and he welcomed the remarks made by the delegation in that regard. The matrix contained in the document would make it possible to monitor the implementation of commitments by all parties and the overall peacebuilding situation in Sierra Leone.

31. Relations between the Commission and Sierra Leone were entering a welcome new phase. The Framework must now be swiftly implemented on the ground. His delegation would continue to support all efforts in that regard.

32. **Mr. Abdelaziz** (Egypt) congratulated the Government of Sierra Leone on the recent elections, welcomed the adoption of the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework and expressed appreciation to the Government of Sierra Leone and to the Chairperson for their role in the achievement of such a milestone. He agreed with the delegation that the Framework rested on the twin pillars of national ownership and partnership and that the Framework was a flexible document that could be modified jointly by the Government of Sierra Leone and the Commission. As the Commission began implementing the Framework, it must take seriously the observations made by the delegation and address the areas of concern. Lastly, he reiterated the important role played by civil society, the private sector, donor countries and institutional donors in the implementation of the Framework.

33. **Mr. Sen** (India) congratulated the Government of Sierra Leone on the recent elections and expressed his appreciation to all parties for their efforts in preparing the document just adopted. The Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework marked a new phase in the Commission's engagement with Sierra Leone.

34. The essence of the Framework was a balance between the respective commitments of the Sierra Leonean Government, the Commission and other stakeholders. That balance must be maintained so as to ensure that peacebuilding remained a true partnership, rather than a prescriptive exercise. He welcomed the Framework's strong emphasis on the economic dimension, as a key element for long-term peace consolidation and stability, and the inclusion of energy as a separate priority area. Unless Sierra Leone was assisted in improving electricity generation, distribution and management, other efforts to consolidate peace would suffer. The Framework's recognition of the importance of capacity-building was also welcome. A strategic priority of peacebuilding in any post-conflict society was to increase the State's capacity to govern effectively.

35. The Framework also referred to national ownership and the effective, transparent and sustainable exploitation of Sierra Leone's natural resources. While he fully supported the emphasis on increasing Sierra Leone's capacity to manage its natural wealth, the Commission must not neglect the demand side of the equation, which required Sierra Leone's international partners to ensure that their corporate actors adhered to appropriate standards in their interactions in post-conflict States.

36. Looking beyond the Commission, he said that the lesson to be learned from the period from 1980 to 2002 was that the international community needed to ensure that Sierra Leone did not remain trapped in an economy based on agricultural products, with their diminishing returns, but exploited its mineral resources, which offered better returns.

37. As action shifted to implementing the Framework, the Commission needed to devise new and creative approaches to marshalling resources for post-conflict countries and provide access to advice from qualified experts on specific peacebuilding issues; further improve coordination among actors on the ground, in particular between United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and with the Peacebuilding Support Office; and, with regard to tracking and reviewing progress, avoid placing an excessive burden on the Government of Sierra Leone in terms of preparing and implementing reports.

38. **Mr. Gaspar Martins** (Angola) welcomed the adoption of the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework, noted with satisfaction that the Government of Sierra Leone accepted the Framework and had already proposed amendments to it, and welcomed the fact that those amendments would be taken into account. Sierra Leone would become an even greater success story if the Framework was implemented successfully. In that regard, he agreed with the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General on the importance of achieving concrete results. He also welcomed the fact that the Framework took account of capacity-building and the energy sector, with concrete measures to be taken in the context of peacebuilding to ensure that energy was addressed seriously, since without energy the Sierra Leonean economy would be unable to function as the Commission hoped.

39. **Ms. Pratt** (West Africa Network for Peacebuilding in Sierra Leone), speaking as the representative of civil society via video link from Freetown, said that, since the very beginning, civil society organizations had been involved in developing and shaping the Commission's success by participating regularly in meetings, conferences and workshops; organizing dialogue forums, research and publishing; and lobbying for the attainment of its aims and objectives. Burundi and Sierra Leone had gradually made the Commission's mandate a reality. It had also been recognized, however, that the case of Sierra Leone was not unique; in that regard, she mentioned a number of other countries intending to benefit from the Commission. The importance of continuous post-conflict engagement by international donors and partners could not, therefore, be overemphasized.

40. Sierra Leone had just held one of the freest and fairest elections in a post-conflict context. The success of those elections would be further enhanced by support for peace consolidation, provision of basic social services and improved democratic governance. The participation of civil society at the current juncture was, therefore, a welcome development.

41. Civil society organizations viewed the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework as the imperative binding document that would provide the basis for fulfilling the Commission's mandate. She called on the international community and donors to honour their commitment to achieving the goals in the Framework's five priority areas and, in that regard, reiterated civil society's support for the inclusion of the energy sector. Civil society organizations supported the implementation of the Framework and, in cooperation with the Government of Sierra Leone and international partners, were implementing programmes and activities in furtherance of its goals. In particular, they were seeking to raise awareness of the Framework; to develop a matrix for civil society's efforts to realize the goals contained therein; to actively engage in the monitoring and tracking process, including by advocating for a formal role for civil society in the monitoring group in providing feedback on implementation and inputting data in the Framework matrix; to strengthen the network of civil society organizations; and to participate in international civil society networks with a view to monitoring the Commission's and other stakeholders' progress in meeting their commitments.

42. Civil society organizations had a number of concerns, however, relating, in particular, to the urgent need to address peace consolidation with a specific agenda for post-election reconciliation; the allocation of existing resources in the light of the additional priority area; the political will of donor countries to provide additional resources; support for the local government elections in 2008 and, in particular, for the National Electoral Commission; the need to clarify the focus of the Peace Consolidation Strategy; and the strategy regarding the proposed scale-down of the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone. A

recent article in a national newspaper had stated that the recent elections had highlighted deep-seated political tensions and cleavages among the population of Sierra Leone along ethnic and geographical lines, which had the potential to escalate in the period leading up to the local government elections in 2008; that the National Electoral Commission still did not have the required capacity to conduct the 2008 local council elections and would therefore require the assistance of the United Nations; that, despite considerable progress in enhancing the professionalism and effectiveness of the army and the police, both continued to be plagued by logistical deficiencies and inadequate funding; and that, given the ongoing political tensions and lack of economic progress, there was a risk that the fragile peace could unravel if those issues were not addressed on a priority basis. It was therefore imperative for the Government to adhere to its commitments and for donors to provide additional resources so that Sierra Leone's practical and strategic needs could be met. Civil society supported the Framework and would use all available means to contribute to the achievement of the commitments contained therein.

43. **Ms. Kabba** (Sierra Leone), speaking via video link from Freetown, welcomed the fact that the Commission had heeded the Government's call for energy to be included as a priority area. The President of Sierra Leone had described the country's inadequate electricity supply as a national priority that deserved immediate attention and had announced the establishment of a Presidential energy task force that would introduce emergency measures aimed at restoring electricity and develop a road map for long-term sustainable electricity supply throughout the country. The Government had also promised to keep development partners informed about critical issues and policies in the electricity sector. The Ministry of Energy and Power was working with the Task Force and other stakeholders to address the energy crisis, with a view to providing reliable, cost-effective, sustainable and environmentally compliant energy to satisfy the present and future needs of all sectors. The main approach it had taken was public-private partnership, which benefited households, business and industry alike. A comprehensive national energy policy document setting out short-, medium- and long-term goals and strategies would soon be prepared.

44. The Government recognized the efforts made thus far on security sector reform and welcomed the substantive gains made with regard to the effectiveness of the security forces. Such efforts strengthened institutional capacity and added value to ongoing efforts on stability, security and peace consolidation. They must be safeguarded and sustained at all costs.

45. She welcomed the fact that the Framework was based on the principles of national ownership, mutual accountability and sustained engagement and was a flexible document which could be modified jointly by the Government of Sierra Leone and the Commission in response to developments in the peace consolidation process.

46. The fact that the tool for the analysis of priorities, challenges and risks for peacebuilding had taken account of existing national risk-reduction and peace consolidation priorities was also welcome. Many strategies and commitments were affected by a lack of political will and limited resources, the limited capacity of both Government and civil society, the constraints of coordination mechanisms and inadequate arrangements with international partners. Her Government was determined to address those challenges, but was also grappling with the poor state of infrastructure, in particular that relating to water and electricity supply.

47. With regard to mutual commitments, she agreed that primary responsibility for peace consolidation and national development lay with the Government of Sierra Leone and, in that regard, welcomed the inclusion of the energy sector as a priority area in which the Government had specific commitments. However, she noted with disappointment that the timelines mentioned in the Framework were all ongoing. The Commission must not only identify goals, but also set specific targets in order to assist the Government in keeping track of benchmarks and indicators and reaching its final destination. With regard to energy, for example, the Government was well aware that the country's power transmission lines were not in a good state and was aiming to have 50 per cent more power transmission lines by February 2008. Without specific timelines, however, it would be very difficult for the Government to keep track of what it had done thus far and what it still needed to do.

48. In the short term, the Government was focusing on public-private partnership, emergency rehabilitation of transmission networks and loss-prevention measures. In that regard, she mentioned the work being carried out on power lines in the west of the country and the establishment of a distribution and safety network as part of a project already submitted to the United Nations. Under the capacity-building support programme for the second half of 2008 and 2009, the capacity of existing power plants would be increased, new power plants developed and feasibility studies conducted on biomass, wind power and a national grid. Those initiatives would continue until 2012. The Government was also aware of the potential for interconnection with other countries in the region and with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) initiative known as the West African Power Pool.

49. However, the only way that Sierra Leone could truly benefit was if it had finished products to export and the only way that it could add value to products was if it had electricity. For without electricity, there could be no laboratories, no teaching materials, particularly computers, no progress and, consequently, no jobs for Sierra Leone's young people. In that regard, she urged the Commission to revisit the timelines contained in the Framework and phrase them in such a way as to assist the Government as much as possible in realizing its vision.

50. **Mr. Mann** (United Kingdom), speaking via video link from Freetown, said that his Government was confident that the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework would strengthen, coordinate and give structure to relations between Sierra Leone and the international community. In particular, the United Kingdom welcomed the emphasis on support for local elections and looked forward to the challenge, on both sides, of delivering on the commitments made.

51. **Mr. Sow** (Guinea) said that the adoption of the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework was an important step towards building peace and stability in Sierra Leone and the region. It would help to mobilize the necessary political, technical and financial support for Sierra Leone. His delegation welcomed the Commission's stated commitment to review continued engagement after 2010 and integrate a subregional dimension in its engagement with Sierra Leone, notably through enhanced partnerships with the countries in the subregion and support for the Mano River Union and its secretariat, which had been nearly moribund. It commended the role played by the Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in peacebuilding efforts. The Secretary-General must also play his rightful role in those efforts. Priority should be given to additional financial and technical support for the Mano River Union, which would help to enhance cross-border trust and address such problems as illicit arms trafficking and other threats.

52. **Mr. Muñoz** (Chile) said that he was grateful to the new authorities of Sierra Leone for continuing the peacebuilding efforts of the previous Government. The Framework was an excellent road map with specific steps to guide national and international peacebuilding efforts. By adopting the Framework, the Commission had reaffirmed the fundamental principle of national ownership, mutual accountability and sustained engagement. His Government would soon be planning a cooperation project with Sierra Leone in the area of microenterprises.

53. **Mr. Palouš** (Czech Republic) said that his delegation welcomed the adoption of the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework and fully subscribed to the basic principles of national ownership, mutual accountability and sustained engagement. The adoption of the Framework marked the end of the first stage of the Commission's activities and the beginning of the most important part of its efforts: implementation of its plans on the ground. He hoped that the people of Sierra Leone would soon experience the benefits of the peace dividend in their daily life. His Government reiterated its full support for the ongoing peacebuilding efforts in the country and would be considering ways of translating that support into concrete terms.

54. **Mr. Tarragô** (Brazil) said that the Framework played an important role in guiding the cooperation between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Government of Sierra Leone. His Government supported the principle of national ownership, mutual accountability and sustained engagement. Sierra Leone had made remarkable democratic progress with its recent holding of elections and transmission of power and set an example for other African countries. Nevertheless, much remained to be done to consolidate peace there. Improving economic infrastructure and capacity-building were essential. Addressing the crisis in the energy sector was also of crucial importance for

post-conflict reconstruction and long-term development. Another important issue was the need to improve natural resource management.

55. The adoption of the Framework indicated that the Commission was gaining momentum in its work and consolidating its position in the United Nations. The statements made by the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone and the delegation should be taken into account in the periodic reviews of the implementation of the Framework. There was a need to make the Framework a reality, coordinate stakeholders, mobilize resources, improve the daily life of the population and strengthen the prospects for peace and political stability in Sierra Leone.

56. **Mr. Ruddyard** (Indonesia) said that his delegation was very encouraged by the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone to consolidate peace and work towards building a united, democratic and prosperous country. The development of the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework was testimony to the strong will of the stakeholders concerned to promote cooperation between the Government and the Commission. The important role of the United Nations system and bilateral and multilateral partners had also been reflected in the Framework. There was a crucial need to enhance support for national frameworks and strategies such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. Any duplication of existing arrangements must be avoided. The key challenges faced by the Government, including youth unemployment, inadequate State capacity, justice and security sector reform and energy-sector development, required urgent assistance from the international community. The Commission's global advocacy role could be pivotal in marshalling much-needed resources for Sierra Leone. His delegation underlined the importance of national ownership and hoped that the process of mutual engagement would be further strengthened during the development of a monitoring tool for the Framework. The Commission's work must reflect the priorities and needs of Sierra Leone. Furthermore, the Framework and monitoring tool must be flexible enough to adapt to evolving realities on the ground.

57. **Mr. Lidén** (Sweden) said that the establishment of the Commission constituted one of the most important agreements by leaders at the World Summit for Social Development. It was responsible for proposing integrated strategies for recovery, developing best practices, bringing together actors, marshalling resources and securing the international community's enduring attention to post-conflict recovery. Sweden would continue to promote the Commission as an effective instrument for peacebuilding.

58. His delegation welcomed the adoption of the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework. Continuous tracking and evaluation would be indispensable in efforts to implement it. He commended the recent free and fair general elections. Preparations for local elections in 2008 would be another milestone in consolidating peace. However, the *Human Development Report* had recalled the significant challenges ahead and acute need for the continuous engagement of the international community. Whereas Sierra Leone ranked last in the Human Development Index for 2007, the Framework marked a possible path towards increased human development.

59. The Commission's work must include quick-impact projects to demonstrate peace dividends and meet the high expectations of the people. Further support for reconciliation must be an integral aspect of its work. His delegation had taken note of the emphasis placed by the Government on the provision of energy to its people and the private sector. The energy sector would be a key to progress in areas such as health, employment and education. Sweden also underlined the importance of women's equal participation in society as a fundamental right and as a precondition for peace, democracy and development. Another critical issue was good corporate governance and transparent criteria for concessions and contracts for exploitation of Sierra Leone's forests, fisheries and minerals.

60. Sweden would continue to engage in Sierra Leone's development in the coming years. In 2007, it had provided $2.5 million to the UNDP country office for the transitional initiatives fund, $1 million in humanitarian aid, some $800,000 for the Special Court and $15 million to the Peacebuilding Fund, some of which had been allocated to Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone featured among the priority countries which his Government had identified for development cooperation. The Framework could serve as a good example for other countries emerging from the scourge of war. To allow the strategy to fail was not an option.

61. **Ms. Tupou** (Commonwealth Secretariat) said that the Framework identified the key development issues

facing Sierra Leone and provided a useful guide for coordinating the work of all partners. She underscored the importance of strengthening a culture of democracy and inclusive political dialogue. The Commonwealth would be continuing its activities across Africa, including its workshops on Government and opposition, especially in West Africa.

62. **Mr. Amieyeofori** (Nigeria) said that the Framework would complement ongoing post-conflict rehabilitation and reintegration efforts in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone's recent peaceful democratic transition showed that the country was ready to embrace peace and democracy and rebuild its social, economic and physical infrastructure. However, like most countries emerging from conflict and most of the economies currently undergoing liberalization in the West African subregion, Sierra Leone's political and economic structures were still fragile and required support. His delegation fully supported the vision of the new Government and the peacebuilding priorities identified in the Framework. He noted with particular satisfaction the emphasis placed on the regional dimension for the maintenance of peace in Sierra Leone and the region. The adoption of the Framework must be followed up with action so that the rising expectations in the country would be met. Therefore, it was important for the mechanism for monitoring follow-up to the commitments made by donors to be instituted, with the Council of Elders of the Economic Community of West African States playing a critical role.

63. **Mr. Valenzuela** (European Community) said that the recent elections in Sierra Leone marked a positive development in its progress towards the consolidation of democracy and peace. The adoption of the Framework was a great step forward towards building on that accomplishment. It showed the continued commitment to peacebuilding among a wide spectrum of Sierra Leonean forces and would further strengthen the partnership between Sierra Leone and the international community.

64. Sierra Leone currently relied on the assistance of a few international partners. The European Community was among the major donors. A key result of the Commission's work had been to broaden the donor base in the country. New financial resources, such as a multi-donor trust fund, could facilitate the involvement of new donors by providing joint delivery mechanisms, thus reducing transaction and administrative costs for donors and the Sierra Leonean authorities alike. He drew attention to the financial gap in assistance for the preparations for the local elections scheduled for 2008. For Sierra Leone, the elections were the next important step towards democracy and sustainable peace. The international community must ensure continued support for the democratic process.

65. The European Commission welcomed the attention given to the energy sector in the Framework. The Framework rightly tackled energy in its peacebuilding dimension and addressed Sierra Leone's short-term energy needs. Long-term development of the sector should not be neglected. The inclusion of the sector in the Framework was a good example of the impact which the Commission could have in encouraging the mobilization of additional resources around nationally identified peacebuilding priorities. His delegation also noted with satisfaction the attention given to natural resource management in the Framework. He stressed the importance of coordination between the Framework and other development frameworks, such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper or the country strategy drafted jointly by the Government of Sierra Leone, the European Community and the United Kingdom, particularly in the drafting of the matrix for review of progress in the implementation of commitments and identification of indicators and benchmarks. The European Community would remain engaged with the Government of Sierra Leone and the Commission.

66. **Mr. Fernie** (United Kingdom) said that government ownership and capacity-building were both essential for the Government of Sierra Leone to effectively implement the peacebuilding strategies. His delegation saw the marginalization of women as a cross-cutting issue that informed many of the commitments within the Framework. In implementing the Framework's provisions, it was important to establish clear benchmarks and timetables as well as an efficient monitoring mechanism. In addition, it was necessary to ensure coordination with other assistance frameworks and to encourage international partners to harmonize their efforts with the Government's priorities. However, given that those priorities could change, a flexible tracking mechanism should be established in order to identify emerging gaps in the Government's strategies and effectively allocate available resources.

67. The Peacebuilding Commission should consider new ways of mobilizing resources and broadening the

donor base in addition to increasing the participation of civil society in the peacebuilding process. His delegation welcomed the new contributions pledged by such countries as Chile. His Government remained firmly committed to providing predictable and long-term financial assistance to Sierra Leone. It would continue to advocate support for the peacebuilding process in Sierra Leone based on the Framework. Furthermore, it was important that current and potential partners should know that the principles of national ownership, mutual accountability and sustained engagement established by the Framework were strongly endorsed by members of the Peacebuilding Commission, the United Nations system and the Government of Sierra Leone.

68. **Mr. Rees** (United States of America) said that the Framework should serve as a reference tool that focused international attention on priorities and gaps in the peacebuilding process. In addition, the Framework should promote dialogue among stakeholders and allow the international community to better understand the challenges facing Sierra Leone. In order to achieve those goals, the work of the Peacebuilding Commission must be consistent with other strategies such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. The proposal to strengthen the administrative structure of the Mano River Union secretariat set out in the Framework was an example of how the Peacebuilding Commission should broaden its focus and address issues from a regional perspective.

69. **Ms. Gallardo Hernández** (El Salvador) said that the strategies set out in the Framework would significantly benefit the daily lives of the people of Sierra Leone by consolidating peace. It was important to focus on priority areas such as energy, youth education and employment and the empowerment of women in order to ensure the success of the peacebuilding process. Successful implementation of the Framework depended on the political commitment and accountability of the various political factions in the country. In implementing the Framework, it was important for the Peacebuilding Commission to remain vigilant in order to prevent the resurgence of the conflict and political unrest. Her Government reiterated its long-term commitment to the peacebuilding process in Sierra Leone.

70. **Ms. Cormon-Veussière** (France) said that the adoption of the Framework represented an important stage in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission and in relations between the Commission and Sierra Leone. Her delegation underscored the need to implement the Framework in a spirit of partnership.

71. **Mr. Abdul Azeez** (Sri Lanka) said that the Framework was the result of coordinated and sustained consultations and clearly set out the commitments of individual stakeholders in the context of mutual cooperation. Although it identified priority areas such as the energy sector, it was also a flexible document that could adapt to emerging needs. It showed that the three pillars of national ownership, mutual accountability and sustained engagement were the key to establishing political and economic stability.

72. **Mr. Dowling** (Ireland) said that it was necessary to step up efforts to achieve national reconciliation in the run-up to the local elections due to be held in July 2008. The successful holding of those elections would help consolidate peace and strengthen local institutions of governance. To that effect, the Government of Ireland had made €1.3 million available for electoral reform through the basket fund and would consider a further contribution in early 2008. It was his delegation's view that the recommendations contained in the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission remained a valid framework for analysing the root causes of the war. In order to consolidate peace in the country, it was also essential to ensure full implementation of the legislation on children's and women's rights enacted in 2007.

73. The fact that the Human Development Index had identified Sierra Leone as the poorest country in the world underscored the need for more financial resources. The Framework recognized that State capacity was inadequate in terms of providing basic services and his delegation urged the Government to prioritize a capacity review of ministries, departments and agencies responsible for delivering basic services. He urged members of the Peacebuilding Commission and traditional and non-traditional donors to find ways to support Sierra Leone through the proposed trust fund, the basket fund established to support electoral reform and United Nations joint programmes.

74. **Mr. Shingiro** (Burundi) said that his Government acknowledged the time and energy spent on the Framework and congratulated the Peacebuilding Commission and the Government and people of Sierra Leone on its adoption. His delegation welcomed the

principles of national ownership, mutual accountability and flexibility established in the framework.

75. **Mr. Corrales** (Panama) said that his delegation wished to draw attention to the inclusive nature of the Framework, which was flexible and could be adapted to emerging needs during the peacebuilding process. It was fully aware of the commitment of the Government and people of Sierra Leone, who were the protagonists of the peacebuilding process and Framework.

76. **The Chairperson** said that the adoption of the Framework represented another major milestone in Sierra Leone's journey from conflict to peace, stability and prosperity. The Framework would ensure Sierra Leone's cooperation with the Peacebuilding Commission on the basis of national ownership, mutual accountability and sustained engagement. By implementing the commitments contained in the Framework, the Peacebuilding Commission could play a critical role in support of the new Government and in meeting the high expectations of the people of Sierra Leone. Stakeholders would be approached individually and collectively regarding the need for additional support and resources.

77. **Ms. Bangura** (Sierra Leone) said that the newly elected President desired to work closely with the Peacebuilding Commission and appreciated the support already received. Mindful of the high expectations of the international community for the peacebuilding process, the people of Sierra Leone were determined to succeed. Her Government had noted the concerns raised by members of the Peacebuilding Commission and would take them into consideration during the implementation process. The Government also looked forward to addressing those issues in the country specific meetings and to further cooperation with the Peacebuilding Commission.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.